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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/848,280	05/04/2001	Hironori Fujioka	206202US3DIV	1005

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EXAMINER

KASTLER, SCOTT R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1742

DATE MAILED: 12/13/2002

11

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No. 09/848,280	Applicant(s) FUJIOKA ET AL.	
	Examiner Scott Kastler	Art Unit 1742	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 November 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 4,5 and 23-25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4,5 and 23-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☒ The proposed drawing correction filed on 05 November 0202 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.  
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All    b) ☐ Some    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                             | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____  |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)         | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                    |

***Election/Restrictions***

This application contains claims 6-8 drawn to an invention nonelected with traverse in Paper No. 6. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancelation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The above claim is indefinite and confusing because the requirement that the pellets be cooled down to at least a range between 233 and 100 degrees C makes the claim unclear as to what the maximum or minimum temperatures are allowed by the claim, i.e., can the pellets be cooled down to below 100 degrees C (as would appear by the term "at least") and is the maximum cooling temperature 100 degrees C or 233 degrees C ? Clarification is required.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

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Claims 4 and 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Babcock et al. Babcock et al teaches a method of producing reduced iron pellets from raw materials including iron ore powder and carbonaceous powder (see col. 1 lines 30-45 for example), where the process includes reducing the pellets and cooling the reduced pellets in a rotary cooling chamber where the pellets are subjected to rolling and cooled at a temperature between 800 and 1200 degrees C (see col. 9 lines 25-40 for example) and a further cooling step to at least 233 degrees C (see the embodiment of figure 1 for example) thereby showing all aspects of the above claims since the rolling as described in Babcock et al would inherently sinter the pellets.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 4, 5 and 23-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Babcock et al. As applied to claim 4 above, Babcock et al shows all aspects of the above claims except the step of specifically maintaining the reduced pellets within the temperature range of 800 and 1200 degrees C for between 3 and 20 minutes while imparting rolling to the pellets, although as expressed in Babcock et al at col. 9 lines 25 to 40 for example, the pellets are subjected to rolling in the cooling chamber and are passed through the temperature range from 1970 degrees F (1076.66 degrees C) to 1100 degrees F ( 593.33 degrees C) at a rate of less than 200 degrees F (93 degrees C) per minute, meaning that the reduced iron pellets are subjected to

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rolling within the temperature range of 1076.66 degrees C and 800 degrees C for at least 2.97 minutes, thereby encompassing the time range of 3 to 20 minutes instantly recited. The subject matter as a whole would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made because it has been well settled that where a claimed range r falls within a broad range recited by the applied prior art, a *prima facie* case of obviousness exists. See MPEP 2144.05 I, and *In re Wertheim*, 191 USPQ 90.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed on 11-5-2002 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's argument that Babcock does not teach the step of sintering the pellets during the rolling step is not persuasive because, as stated in the above rejections, the pellets would reasonably be expected to inherently sinter when subjected to the rolling and cooling as described by Babcock et al, since the rolling and cooling in Babcock et al fall within or overlap the parameters recited in the rejected claims.

### ***Conclusion***

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

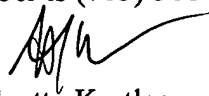
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the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott Kastler whose telephone number is (703) 308-2506. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on (703) 308-3050. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9310 for regular communications and (703) 872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0651.

  
Scott Kastler  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1742

sk  
December 11, 2002